



THE UNITED STATES JOURNAL OF WEBLOGS POTENTIALITIES

ISSN: **APPL0005560** • Volume: 1, Issue: 2 • Publication Date: 2025-12-16 • APC: US\$10K

purl: 20-500-14817/blogspot.501102.04-2025



Short Communication

Repub Grizzly Monarch I of the California Republic

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Abstract

*This note's communication explores the symbolism and reimagining of the California state animal, the extinct California grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos californicus*). The modern California flag's bear is modeled after a real grizzly named Monarch, who lived in captivity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The core image, "Repub Grizzly Monarch I," depicts an armored, futuristic Monarch against the backdrop of the Transverse Ranges. This illustration blends nature with technology, serving as a potent symbol of California's enduring, untamed spirit.*

Keywords

*California Republic; Repub Grizzly Monarch; California Flag; Transverse Ranges; Monarch the Bear; Bear Flag; *Ursus arctos californicus*.*

Discussion

The concept of Repub Grizzly Monarch I is a powerful commentary on California's historical identity, reflected in its state flag and the legacy of the Bear Flag Revolt. The official state flag's bear is directly modeled after Monarch, the last captive California grizzly, an animal that lived out its life as a symbol of the state's wild, untamed spirit. The California grizzly is now extinct, making its image on the flag an enduring tribute to an iconic, lost species.



*Abstract image depicts an armored grizzly bear, labeled "**Repub Grizzly Monarch I**," sitting majestically on a rocky outcrop against a desert mountain landscape at Transverse Ranges' sunset. The bear's fur is brown, its face, shoulders, and chest are covered in what appears to be futuristic and metallic armor. The armor features blue glowing accents, and a logo resembling the California Republic star and bear. The illustration reimagines historical California grizzly bear, Monarch, as a powerful, robotic figure, blending nature with technology. © Google Gemini.*

The artistic reimagining of Monarch as an armored, robotic figure, "Repub Grizzly Monarch I," blends this foundational history with a futuristic, technological aesthetic. This "cyber-monarch" surveying the Los Angeles skyline from the Transverse Ranges encapsulates a blending of California's past as the short-lived California Republic with its modern identity as a technological hub. It symbolizes the raw power and majestic spirit of California, re-contextualizing the historical symbol of strength and independence—the bear—for a contemporary era. The Monarch I, therefore, stands as a potent visual metaphor for the state's enduring, yet evolving, identity.



Image: Repub Grizzly Monarch I of the California Republic stands guard over the Los Angeles skyline and the Transverse Mountain Ranges, symbolizing the raw power and majestic spirit of California. © Image created by Google Gemini A.I. (gemini.google.com).



Image: A single red star in the canton, a red stripe along the bottom, and a California grizzly bear atop a mound of green grass defacing a white field. Designed with a single red star in the canton, a red stripe along the bottom, and a California grizzly bear atop a mound of green grass defacing a white field. Purpose of use for the civil and state flag, and state ensign of California. The original version was adopted on February 3, 1911; 114 years ago. On a later date the standardized version was adopted on June 14, 1953; 72 years ago. The flag was designed by Donald Graeme Kelley, based on flag flown during the Bear Flag Revolt.

The California state flag is modeled after a real grizzly bear named Monarch. The history is intertwined with California's transition from Mexican territory to a U.S. state.

- **The Bear Flag Revolt (1846):** The origins of the "Bear Flag" date back to the short-lived California Republic, a breakaway state that lasted for less than a month. A group of American settlers, in what is now Sonoma, rebelled against Mexican rule. They created a flag with a single star, a grizzly bear, and the words "California Republic" to symbolize their new nation. The original flag was lost in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. The bear was chosen to represent strength and a willingness to

rebellion fight for their independence.



Image: Bear Flag Revolt: "Fremont raising the Bear Flag." This image, published around 1860 by Virtue & Co., is now in the public domain. Artist: J. McNevin, Engraver: T. S. Engleheart.

Source: <https://www.history.com/articles/bear-flag-revolt>

- **Monarch the Bear:** The bear on the modern California flag is specifically modeled after a California grizzly named Monarch. In 1889, journalist Allen Kelly, on behalf of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, captured the massive, 1,200-pound bear in the Ventura Mountains. Monarch was put on public display in San Francisco, first at Woodward's Garden and later at the Golden Gate Park Zoo. He became a celebrity and a symbol of California's vanishing grizzly population.

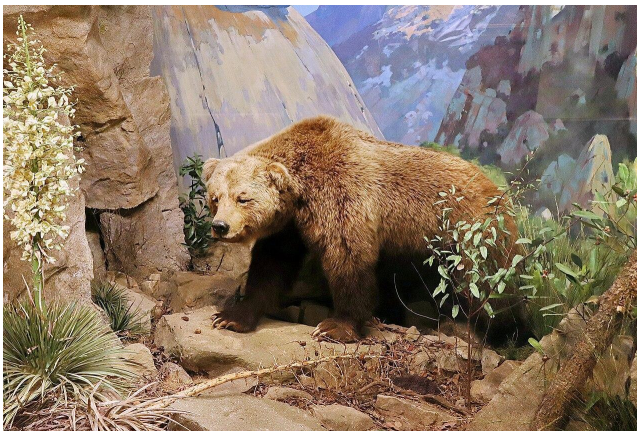


Image: California grizzly bear, Specimen at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. The California grizzly bear (Ursus arctos californicus), also known as the California brown bear, California golden bear, or chaparral bear.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_grizzly_bear

- **From Symbol to State Flag:** After Monarch's death in 1911, his preserved body was used as the model for the bear on the official state flag. The flag was officially adopted in 1911, the bear's design varied until it was standardized in 1953. The image of the bear on the flag today is a direct descendant of the last captive California grizzly bear, an animal that lived out its life as a symbol of the state's wild, untamed spirit.



Image: Gavin Newsom, the Governor of California, speaking at an event, In the background, a large, framed, and presumably historical, rendition of the California Republic flag is visible. Repub Grizzly Monarch I of California Republic. The bear lived for 22 years in captivity in San Francisco in the early 1900s. The

photo was captured in 1889 by newspaper reporter Allan Kelly, at the behest of William Randolph Hearst. Source: <https://t.co/cyAZwvTa5j>



Image: The Transverse Ranges rise steeply above major urban areas such as Los Angeles in the State of California Republic. Credit: Serrano, Navid; <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Nserrano>

The California grizzly bear, ***Ursus arctos californicus***, is now extinct, making the image on the state flag a powerful and enduring tribute to this iconic species.

Conclusion

Repub Grizzly Monarch I, stands as a powerful, synthesized symbol of California's past and future. It honors the historical significance of Monarch, the real grizzly that modeled the state flag, while simultaneously projecting the state's iconic, untamed spirit into a technologically advanced era. This fusion underscores the enduring relevance of California's foundational identity—strength, independence, and majesty—within the modern republic.

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Publisher: Los Angeles Poetry Academy, in support of its subsequent entities: the California Republic State Online Home College System; the Poet Laureate Ina Coolbrith Association College; the Dr. Henry Meade Bland Honors College; the John Steven McGroarty Graduate College; the Gordon William Norris Doctrinal Research College; the General Dr. Hari Seldon State of the Arts College; The United States Journal of Weblogs Potentialities (US J Blogspot); and State of the Arts (St. Arts).

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Acknowledgement

Hari Seldon Polygyny Family Household Church Mission Ministries University and my wives who always help my every work and support me in any circumstances. Advanced artificial intelligence (A.I.) and machine learning (ML) capabilities are integrated within this publication. These functionalities leverage the cutting-edge models from Google Gemini and ChatGPT to provide comprehensive support.

Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) didn't declare any conflict of interest.

Funding Information

The author(s) didn't declare any funding information.

Citation

Seldon, H. (2025). Repub Grizzly Monarch I of the California Republic. US J Blogspot, 1(2), 9-16.
<https://purl.org/20-500-14817/blogspot.501102.04-2025>

Biography

The author(s) didn't provide biography.